

Overview of State Sentencing Trends

Senate Ways and Means Committee
January 29, 2002

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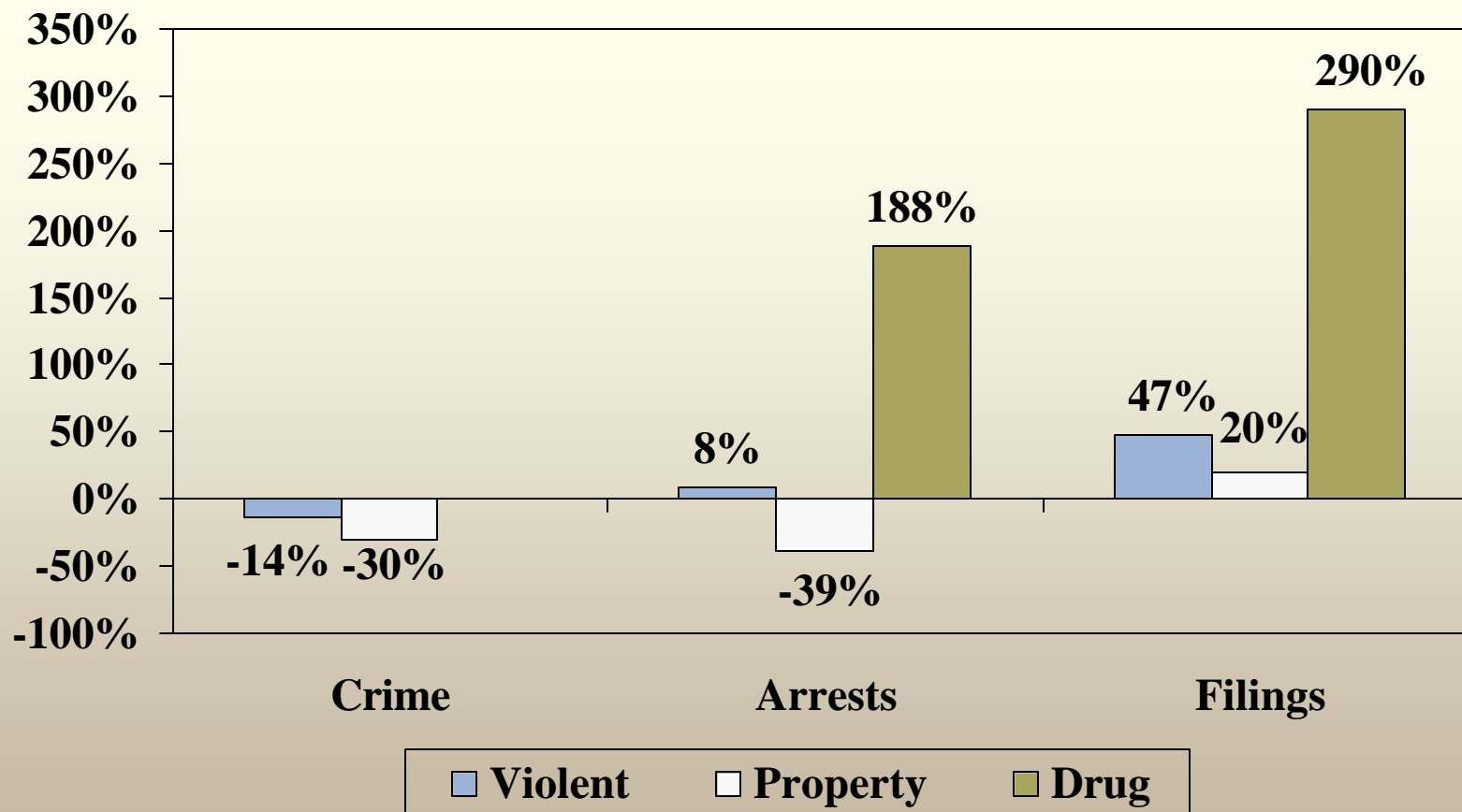


State Sentencing Policy Work Session Agenda

- ❖ **Overview of State Sentencing Trends**
- ❖ **Incarceration & Crime Rates**
- ❖ **The Sentencing Guidelines Commission's Comprehensive Review of State Sentencing Policy & Recommendations**
- ❖ **Governor Locke's Sentencing Proposals**
- ❖ **Senate Judiciary Sentencing Proposals**

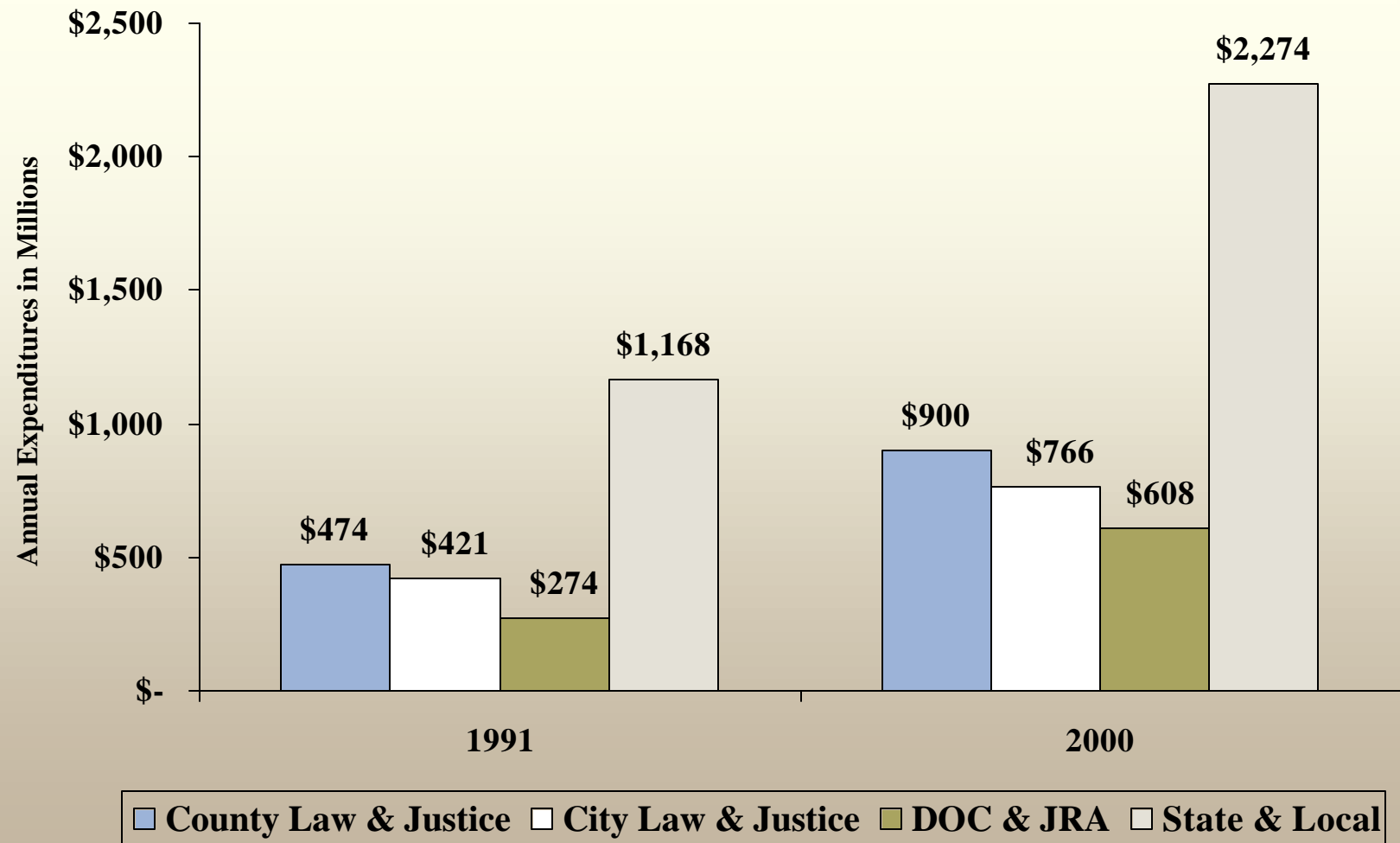
The Criminal Justice System

From 1985-2000, Crime Has Dropped...But Arrests and Prosecutions Are Up, Especially For Violent and Drug Offenses

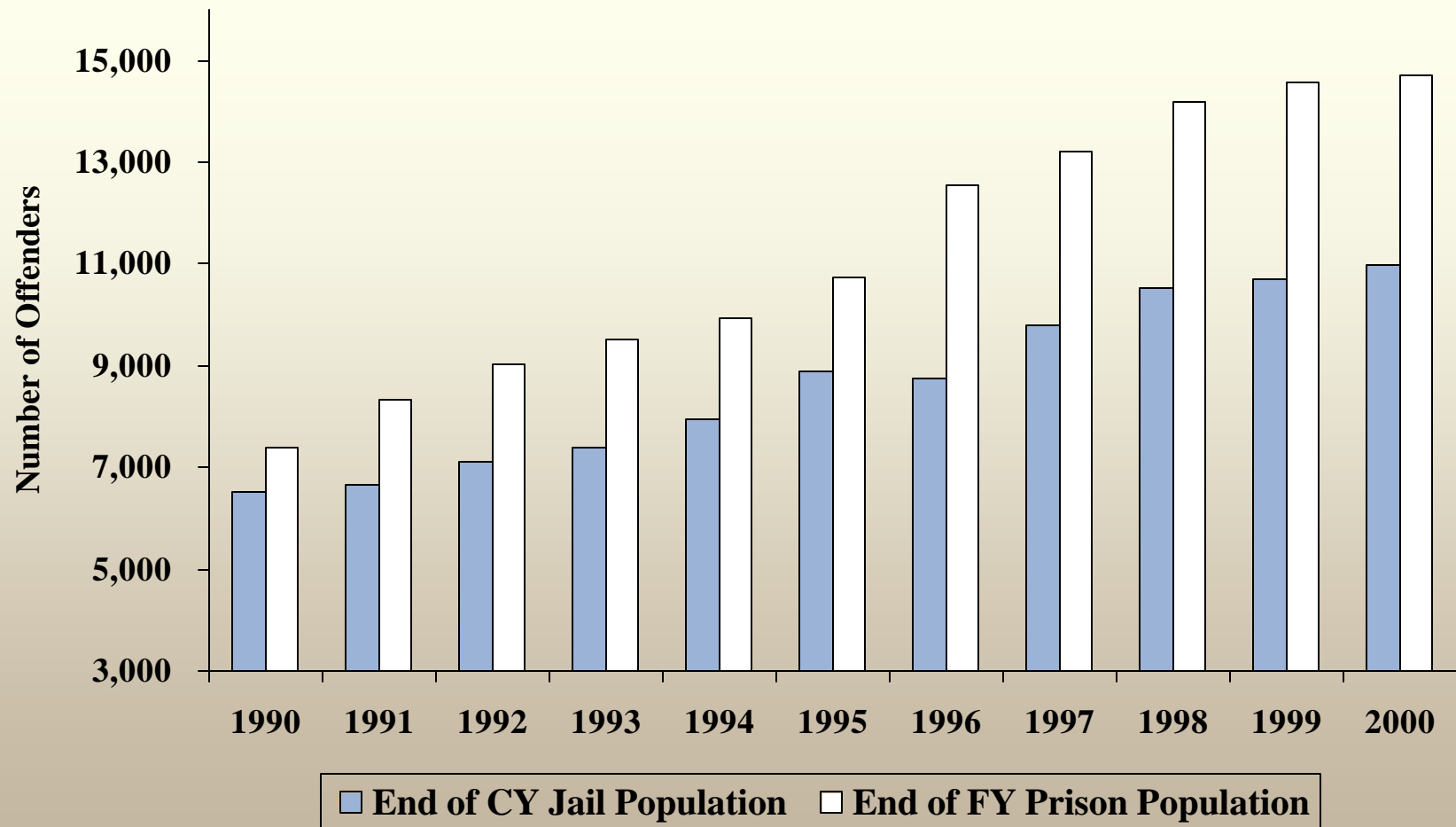


Note: The percentages depicted reflect the percentage changes in rates per 1,000 people in Washington, 1985-2000.

Reflecting These Trends, State and Local Government Criminal Justice Expenditures Have Doubled Over the Last Decade



One of The Primary Drivers Behind Expenditure Growth Has Been The Increase In The Number of People in Jail and Prison

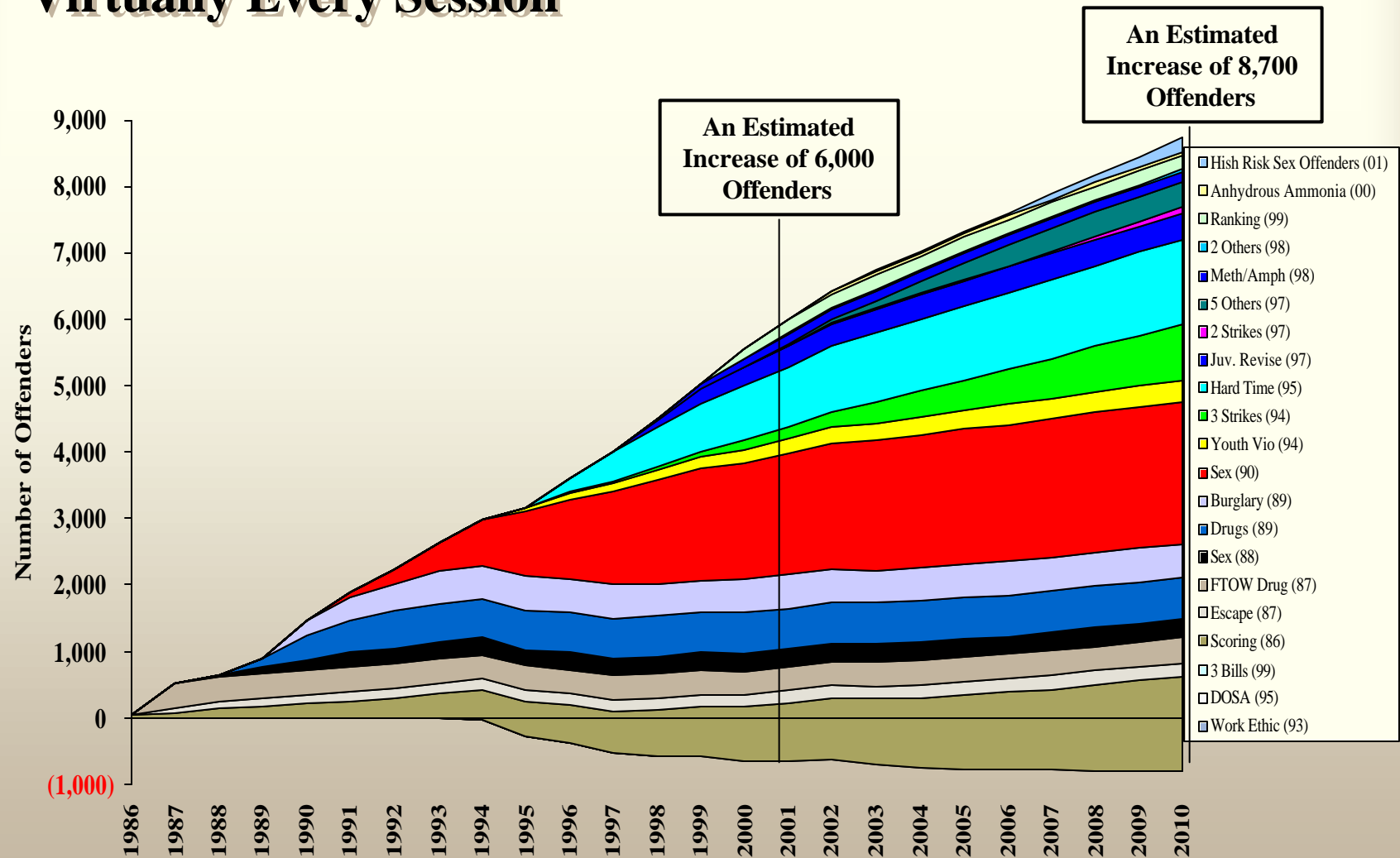


Sentencing Policy & Trends

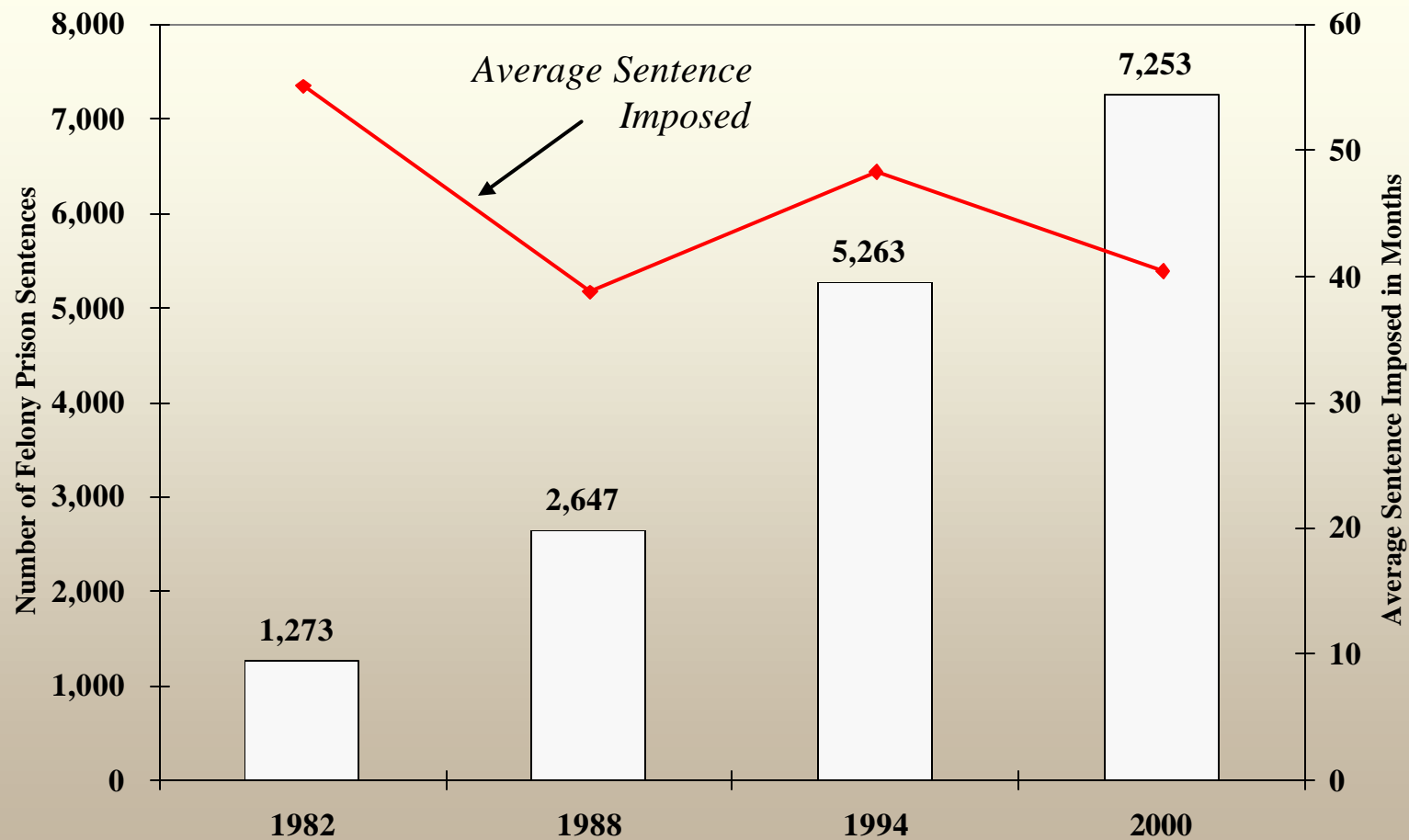
Stated Purposes of the Sentencing Reform Act (RCW 9.94A.010) (1999 Amendments Italicized)

- ❖ Ensure that the punishment for a criminal offense is proportionate to the seriousness of the offense and the offender's criminal history;
- ❖ Promote respect for the law by providing punishment which is just;
- ❖ Be commensurate with the punishment imposed on others committing similar offenses;
- ❖ Protect the public;
- ❖ Offer the offender an opportunity to improve him or herself;
- ❖ Make frugal use of the state's *and local governments'* resources; and
- ❖ *Reduce the risk of reoffending by offenders in the community.*

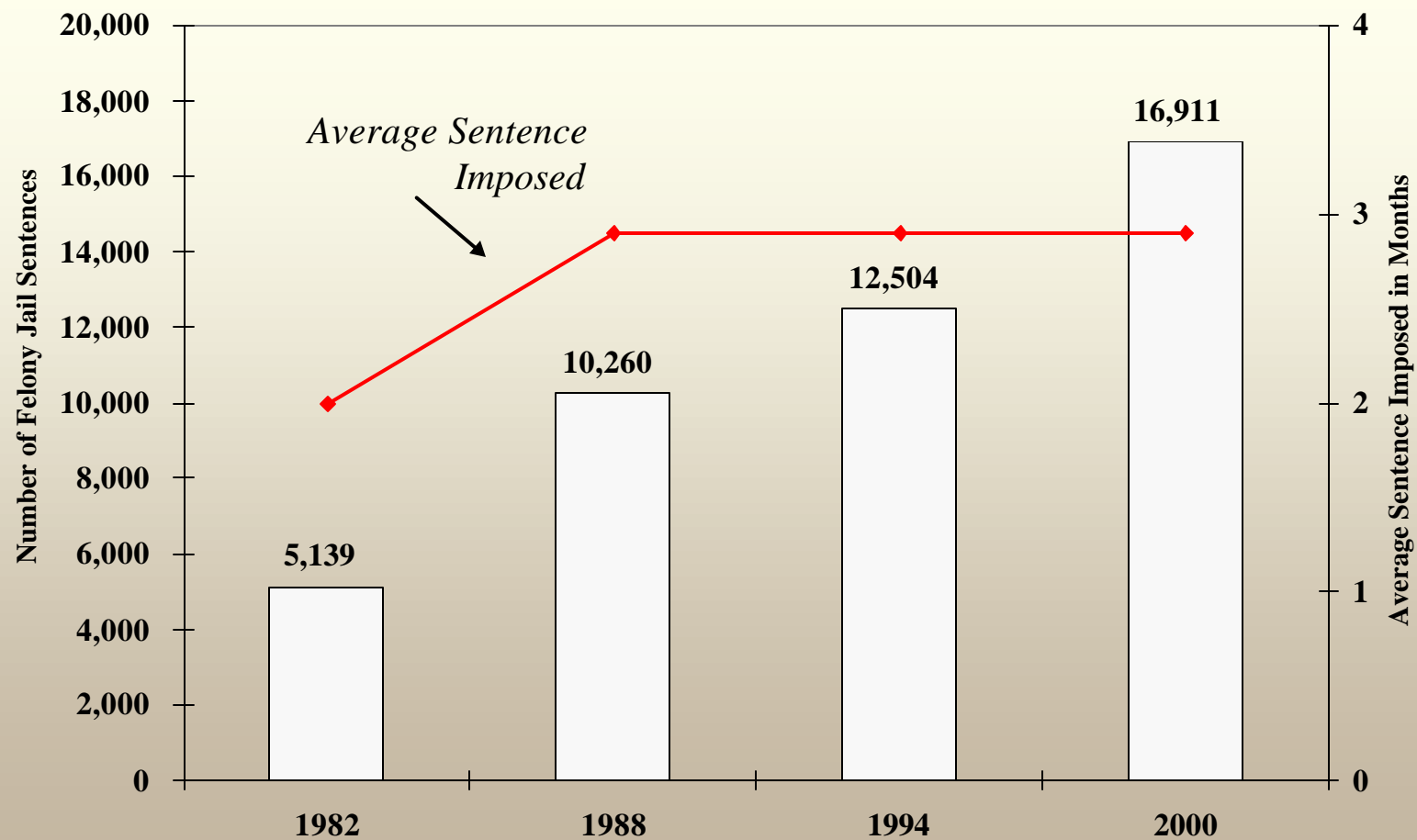
Since the Implementation of Sentencing Reform Act in 1984, The Legislature Has Made Sentencing Changes In Virtually Every Session



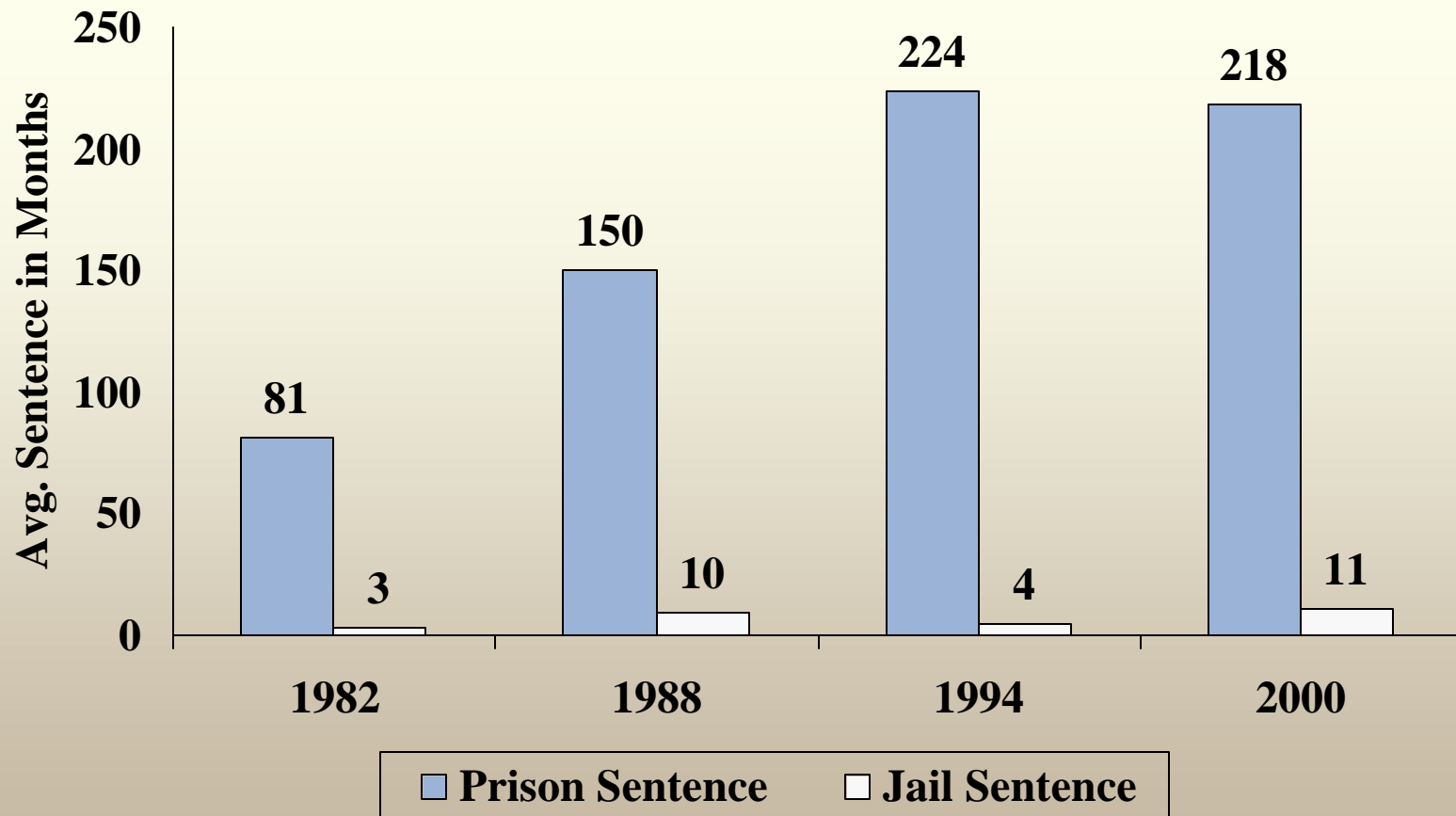
Since 1982, There Has Been a 500 Percent Increase In The Number Of Prison Felony Sentences...While The Average Sentence Imposed Has Decreased 27 Percent



During the Same Time Period, Felony Jail Sentences Have Tripled And The Average Jail Sentence Imposed Has Increased 40 Percent

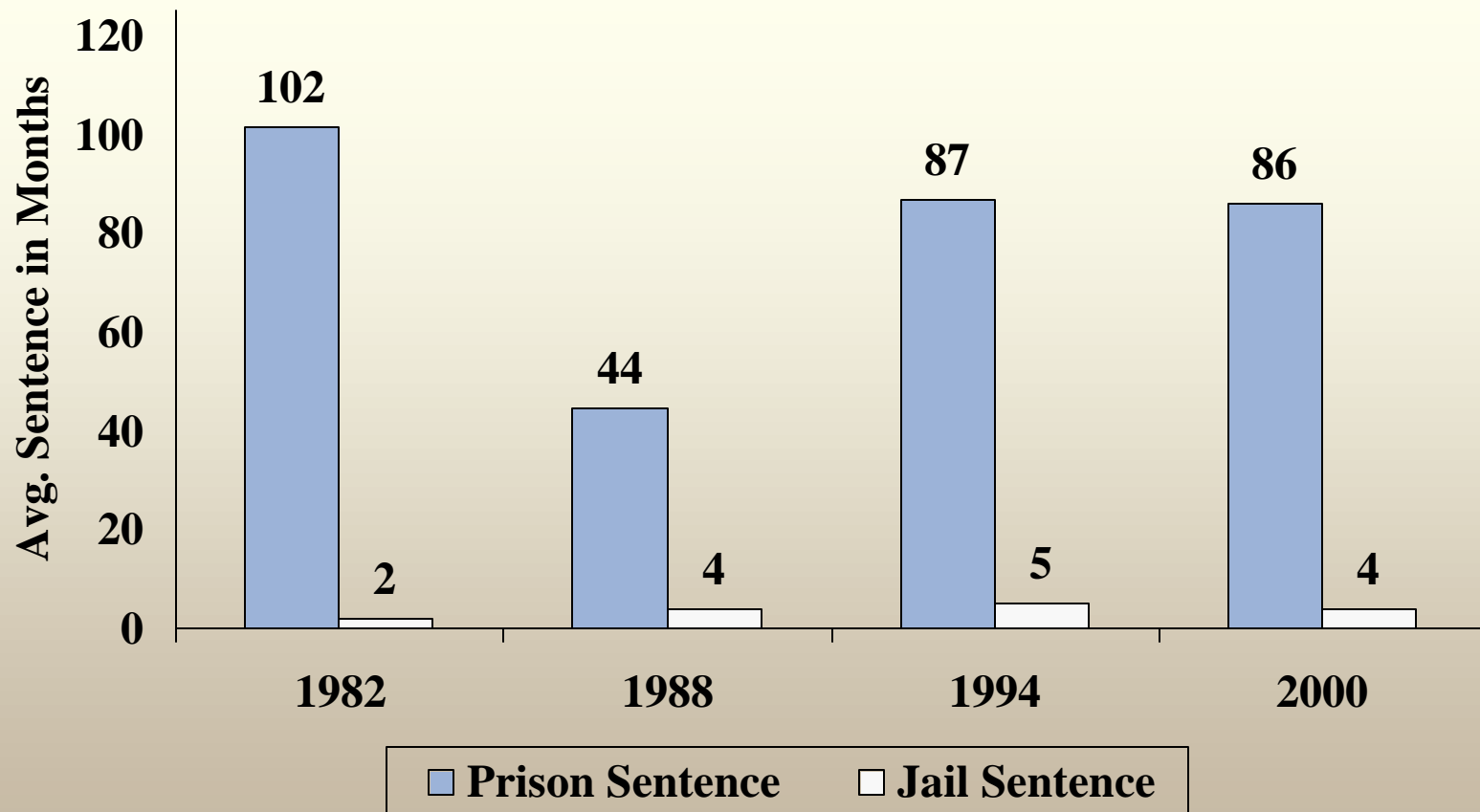


The Sentencing Reform Act and Subsequent Changes Have Resulted In A Dramatic Increase In The Sentence Imposed For Homicide Crimes



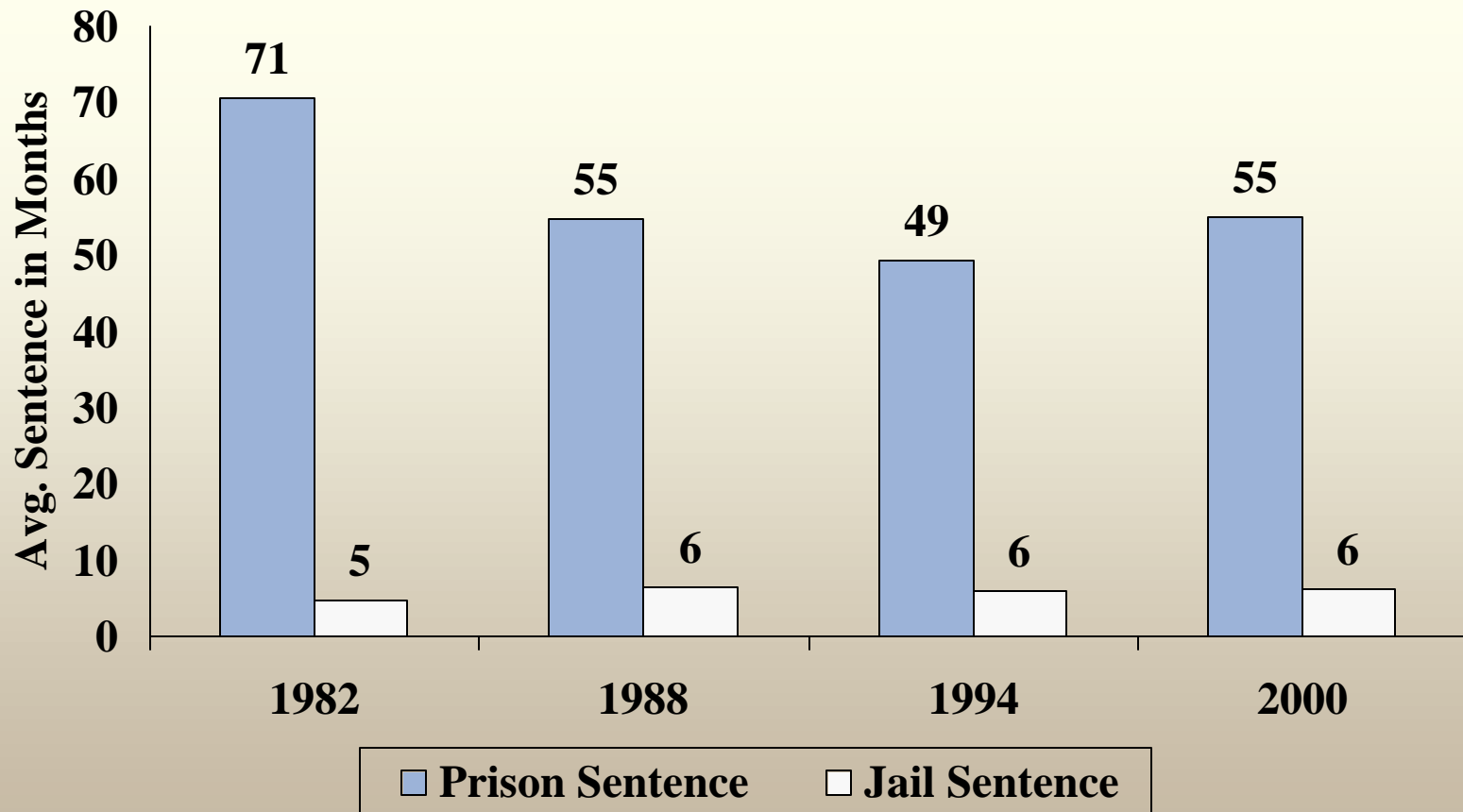
Note: Homicide crimes for purposes of this display include Murder 1, Murder 2, and Manslaughter offenses. The amounts exclude sentences where a death or life without the possibility of release sentence was imposed.

The Prison Sentence Imposed For Sex Crimes, After Initially Going Down Following the Implementation of the SRA, Has Increased Substantially Over The Last Decade



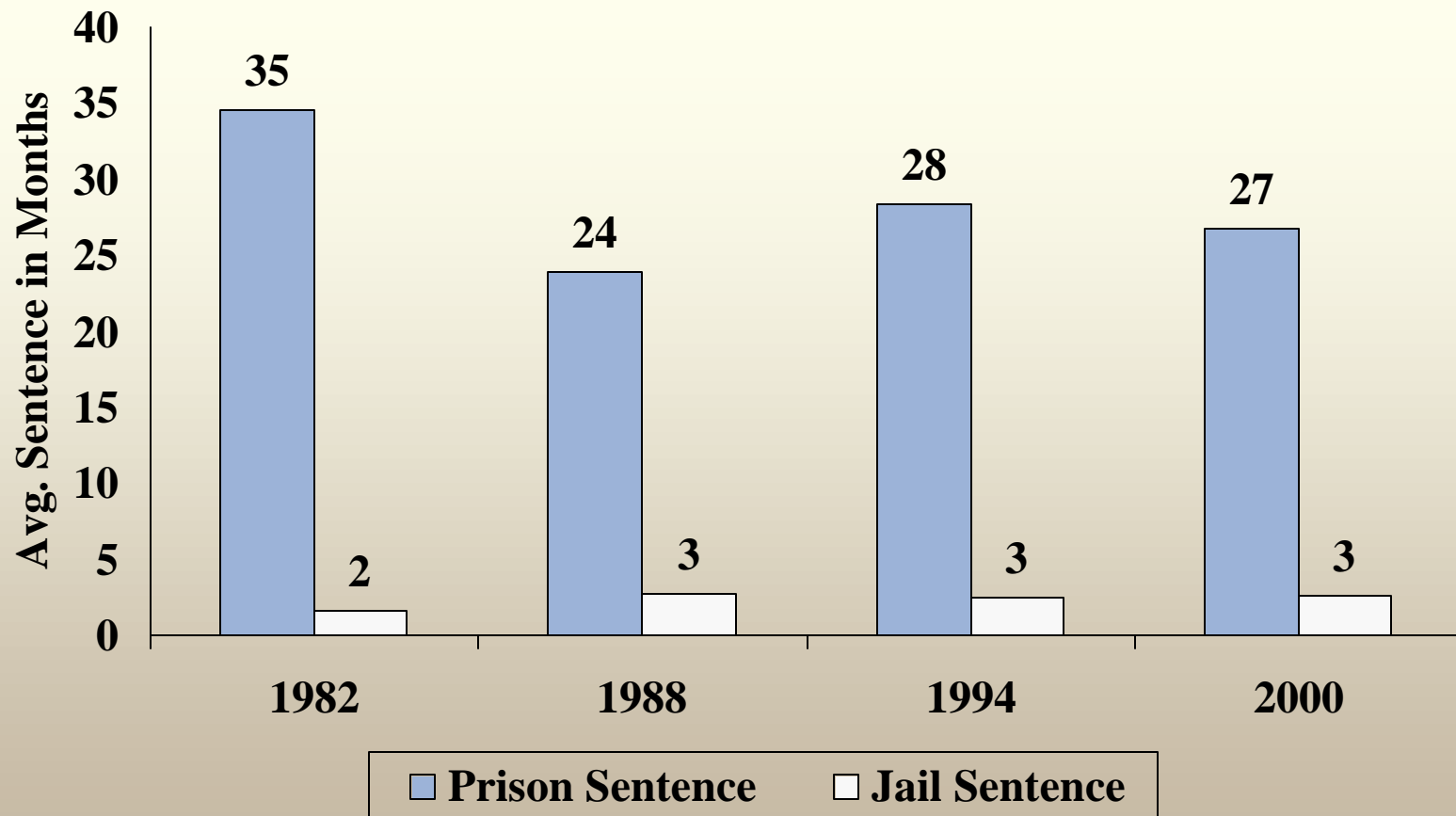
Note: The average sentence depicted excludes individuals where a life without possibility of release sentence was imposed for this offense.

The Sentence For Robbery, After Decreasing Following the Implementation of the SRA, Has Remained Relatively Stable



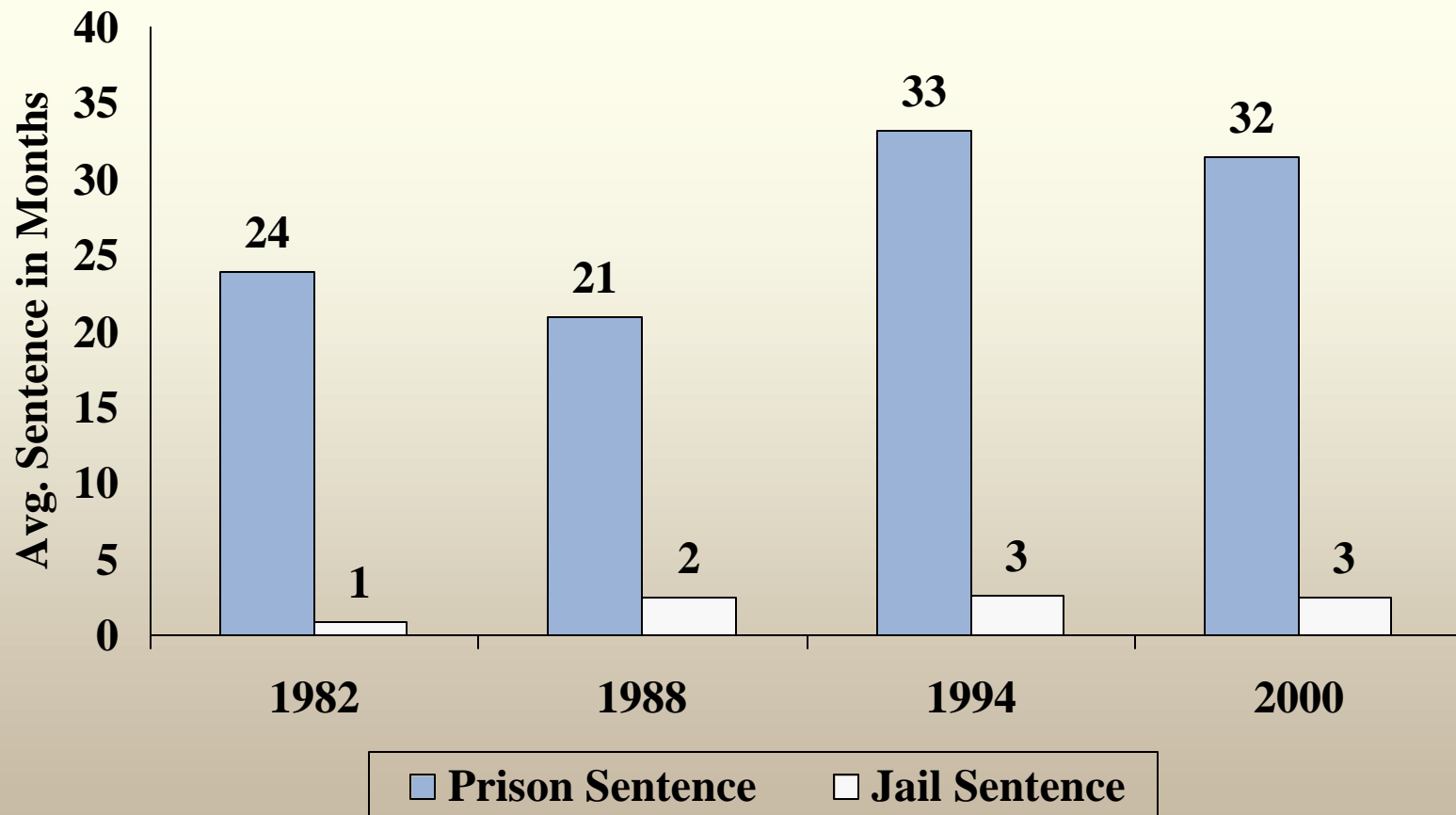
Note: The average sentence depicted excludes individuals where a life without possibility of release sentence was imposed for this offense.

The Sentence Length Imposed For Property Offenses Also Decreased After the SRA...But Has Only Increased Slightly Since Then

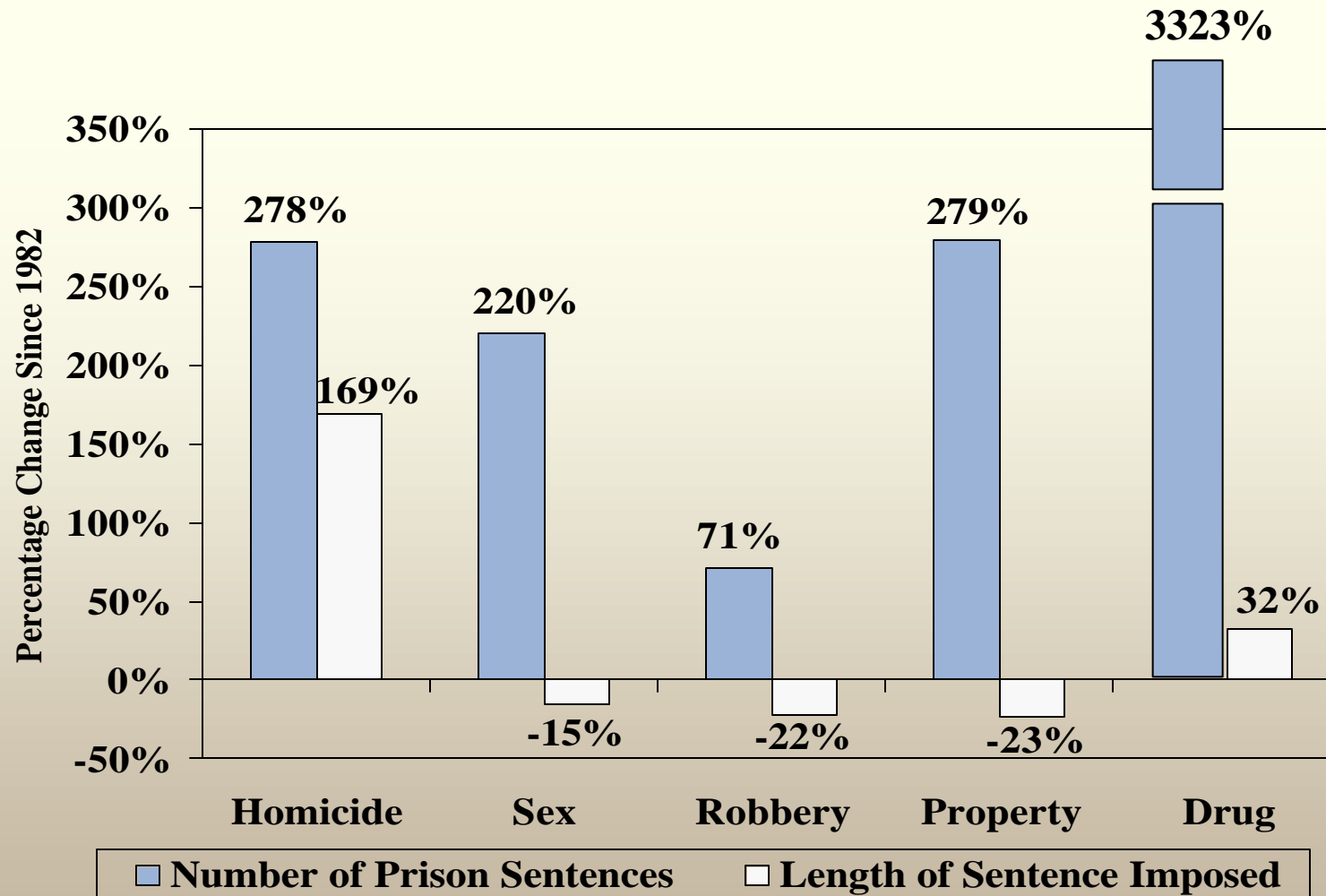


Note: The average sentence depicted excludes individuals where a life without possibility of release sentence was imposed for this offense.

As A Result Of The SRA, The Sentence Imposed For Drug Offenses Decreased...But Then Increased 50 Percent Since 1988



The Change In Sentencing Trends Over The Last 20 Years Varies Significantly By Type of Offense



Except for Violent Offenses, The Change In Jail Sentences Generally Follows The Prison Trends

